



FYI



| PLEASE POST |

Date: September 29, 2023
To: All Victoria Cool-Aid Society Members
Re: Indoor Air Quality – Occupational Health and Safety Information

Hello BCGEU Cool-Aid Society Members,

Recently your union has been made aware of indoor air quality concerns at one or more of your work locations.

Indoor air quality is an important health and safety concern for workplaces. Many workers spend their entire day working inside. When indoor air is not adequate, it can cause issues such as headaches, eye irritation, and coughs among other things. If there are contaminants in the air system such as dust or dirt particles, smoke or chemical contaminants it can make those symptoms worse. A building's HVAC system is designed to distribute outdoor air throughout the building, remove contaminants, odors and control the indoor temperature and humidity. Indoor air contaminants can be drawn in from outdoors and can lead to air quality problems, even if the buildings HVAC system is functioning properly.

Employers and building operators have a responsibility to ensure that workplaces meet indoor air quality requirements stated in the [Occupational Health and Safety Regulations Sections 4.70 to 4.80](#)

(https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/296_97_00_multi#division_d2e7376).

If you think that you may be ill from Indoor Air Quality issues at your worksite, it is important to keep track of when you get your symptoms (aches, pains, headaches, etc.) and when they go away. Just as importantly you should discuss and report any Air Quality concerns with a member of your worksite's joint occupational health and safety committee, your supervisor, employer or a BCGEU shop steward. Employers must investigate when Indoor Air Quality complaints are reported, and look implement corrective actions to improve indoor air quality and follow up.

If the indoor air quality at your workplace is affecting your ability to work safely, you have the right to refuse unsafe work.

For your OHS rights and the steps to refuse unsafe work, [please go here.](https://ohs.bcgeu.ca/your-rights)
(<https://ohs.bcgeu.ca/your-rights>)

If you have any health and safety questions for your workplace, please contact a member of your joint OHS committee, your OHS rep or local steward. If you have OHS concerns or would like to become an OHS rep, please contact us at ohs@bcgeu.ca. You can find us online at <http://ohs.bcgeu.ca>

In solidarity,

Patrick Coghlan, BCGEU Occupational Health and Safety Officer

Kathleen Mann, BCGEU Staff Representative

Kate Banky, BCGEU Local 301 Chairperson

Cheryl Henly, JOHS Co-Chair

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